



- Lobbying
- Media
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75 years of highway advocacy to get America moving!


AMERICAN HIGHWAY USERS ALLIANCE
HIGHWAYS.ORG

Who we are: State affiliate organizations, AAA Clubs, truckers, bus companies, RV and motorcyclists, businesses that desire safe and efficient road networks

Federal Perspective: Serious Challenges Face The Highway Community

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What's going on right now?

Congress

- Today's victory: Appropriators will fully fund the \$39.1 billion program for FY 07
- White House Budget for FY 08 released February 5 – full funding or cuts?
- SAFETEA-LU “Corrections” bill under consideration – research funding on-hold
- Extension through February 15, 2007

What's going on right now (part 2)?

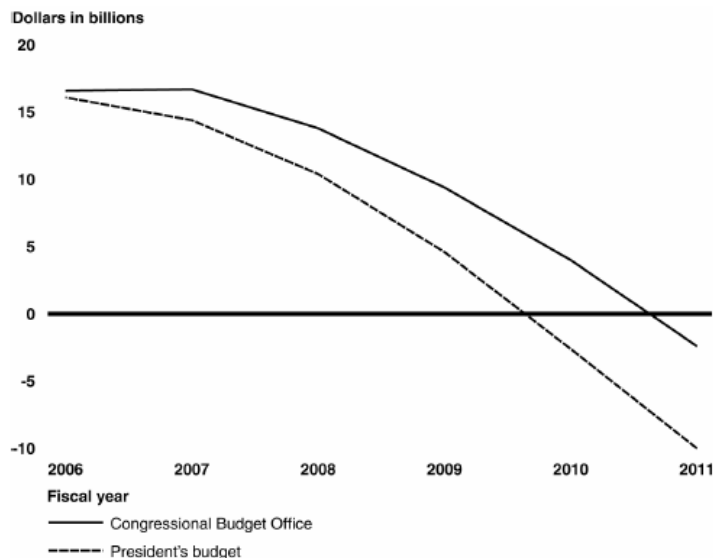
Transportation Revenue and Policy Commission

- Slow start in appointing commissioners, third chairman is Sec Mary Peters.
- The debate is side-tracked by pro and anti-tolling and privatization arguments.
- Little to no progress on defining national needs and objectives.
- Genuine frustration from business leaders on the commission.
- Consensus document in doubt

The Elephant in the Room

- The modest funding increases in SAFETEA-LU are unsustainable without a user fee increase or a big cut in highway funding in 2009 or earlier.
- After the “Bridge to Nowhere” debacle and a widespread perception of pork and waste, will media editorial boards and the public come around to support a user fee increase for this program?

The Near Future for the Highway Trust Fund



Worst Case Scenario

- By 2009, if we don't do something, the federal highway program will be substantially cut.
- If States feel that this is a likely outcome, long-term projects will be drying up very soon.
- If a user fee increase is not achieved, Congress will not reauthorize SAFETEA-LU with cuts

Worst Case Scenario

- Without a SAFETEA-LU reauthorization, stable long-term guaranteed funding and budgetary firewalls for highway user fees are also under threat in the next decade
- Tolling, privatization, and "innovative financing" projects are a supplement, but not a substitute for a strong federal highway program.

Is there any good news?

- User fee increases are more likely with any bipartisan government.
- The new Congress appears more aware of the need to resolve problems, think big, and reform and reauthorize SAFETEA-LU on time.
- Changes at Congress give new transportation chairmen an opportunity to restore media/public support for federal highway programs

Is there any good news? (part 2)

- The anxiety caused by the bad press surrounding SAFETEA-LU and the potential trust fund crisis is uniting highway supporters like never before.
- Unlike the satisfaction (complacency) that followed TEA 21 in 1998, highway advocates are mobilizing early to seek major changes in 2009 and restore trust to the highway trust fund and public support for a national program.

Impact of 2006 Elections (in brief)

- Raised prospects for user fee increases.
- Greater oversight on the Transportation Policy and Revenue commission
- More Congressional opposition to privatization and tolling plans
- More off-highway diversion of highway money possible
- Earmarking should be reduced and reformed.
- Environmental regulation and streamlining likely to be unaffected for the next two years.
- CAFÉ increases and CO₂ caps possible could indirectly harm highway interests

What is the American Highway Users Alliance doing?

- We are proactively building a diverse coalition of new and current stakeholders to move political mountains. Secretary Mineta, widely respected on both sides of the aisle, has volunteered to serve as our honorary chairman, spokesperson, and is focused on growing and broadening our membership roster.

What is the American Highway Users Alliance doing?

- Highway policy isn't just about commuters, so we're hitting the media and broadening our core of supporters with new research that tells other stories
 - Emergency Evacuation Report Card reached 100 million viewers on C-SPAN, FOXNews, MSNBC, USA Today, New York Times, etc.
 - AAA and AARP joining us to promote roadway safety
 - New smart growth research counteract new anti-parking proposals and gain support from retail and real estate industries
 - Travel bottleneck studies increase interest from tourism industry.
 - Safety campaign pitch to NASCAR will add millions of grassroots activists

What is the American Highway Users Alliance doing? (part 2)

- Our excellent bipartisan connections are secured with both Democratic and Republican committee leaders.
- Our studies and press releases have now made The Highway Users the first call for national transportation reporters from all major media and political media.
- For the 2008 elections, we will have a new "How Highway Issues Help Your Campaign" binder for candidates

What is the American Highway Users Alliance doing? (part 3)

- Aggressive lobbying, effective media communications, a diverse membership, and massive grassroots army are the keys to our success.
- We are starting early -- telling the right stories about congestion and safety to the media and politicians. Our stories focus on national economic potential, quality-of-life, Americans' desire to get out of congestion, stories relating highway capacity's role in creating environmental gains.
- We are demanding both funding and reform of the federal program. Groups shouldn't demand one without the other.

The messenger is as important as the message

- Our diverse membership allows us to speak on behalf of the driving public, the business community, and the common good – this gives us tremendous credibility with both elected officials and the media.
- We do not typically talk about the benefits of highways to the construction industry. We credibly talk about the benefits to the public.
- Members include many AAA clubs, trucking organizations, automakers, auto dealers, RV clubs, motorcycling clubs, retailers, shipping companies, high-tech firms, safety companies, as well as construction and materials suppliers

The Best Case Scenario

- A highly motivated and effective army of highway supporters is formed quickly to create national support for mobility and safety.
- A congressional commitment to reform the federal program to regain the public's trust
- Congressional, state & local government officials feel enough media and public support to take bold action and raise highway user fees for highway purposes.
- Renewed public optimism on the transportation industry's ability to reduce congestion.
- On-time reauthorization in 2009 contains stable long term funding, significant increases in highway funds, and sharp reductions in waste.

Thanks

- It's time for a strong, visionary national highway program. While those in this room have little doubt that the public benefits would far exceed costs, much remains to be done to convince politicians, the media, and the public at large. The stakes are huge!
- Your support is critical to our efforts. **THANK YOU** for supporting us!

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